

State of California

# **DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Local Agency Transition**  
**July 2000**



## **A New Beginning**

**TRANSITION PLAN GUIDELINE**

<b>CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>2</b>
BACKGROUND .....	2
TRANSITION PROJECT OBJECTIVES .....	3
<i>Stage 1: Assessment Of Counties' Readiness To Transition .....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Stage 2: Develop A Transition Plan For Early Transition .....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Stage 3: Implement The Transition Plans Of The Remaining Counties .....</i>	<i>3</i>
DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANS .....	4
OBJECTIVES OF THE COUNTY TRANSITION PLAN.....	4
OBJECTIVES OF THE TRANSITION PLAN GUIDELINE .....	4
<b>CHAPTER 2 - TRANSITION PLAN GUIDELINES.....</b>	<b>5</b>
RISK MITIGATION.....	5
<i>Possible Risks.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Risk Mitigation Tactics .....</i>	<i>5</i>
KEY TRANSITION TASKS .....	6
<i>New Agency Set-Up .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Human Resources .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Facilities .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Budget Issues.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Child Support Legal Actions/Forms/Public Notices.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Outreach .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<b>CHAPTER 3 - WORK PLAN.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4 - THE DCSS TRANSITION PLAN.....</b>	<b>14</b>
OVERVIEW .....	14
COUNTY REQUIREMENTS .....	14
COUNTY TRANSITION PLAN WORKSHEET .....	15

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

---

This document provides a draft guideline for the counties' transition plans. It is intended to assist counties in their establishment of new local child support agencies and in the transition of Title IV-D services from the Offices of the District Attorney to new local child support agencies. The guideline incorporates significant elements of the transition plans written by Riverside, Santa Clara, and Kings counties.

### Background

In 1999, the California Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, a package of bills significantly altering the organization, administration, and funding of the state's child support enforcement program. These reforms significantly increased state authority and oversight over the program, and changed state administrative responsibility for developing the statewide child support automation system. Among the more significant changes were the creation of a new state Department of Child Support Services (DCSS); the transfer of local administration from the county district attorneys to separate county child support agencies; and the transfer of responsibility for the procurement of the automation system from the state Health and Human Services Data Center (HHSDC) to the Franchise Tax Board (FTB).

The primary purpose of California's child support enforcement program is to collect support payments from absent parents for custodial parents and their children. Child support offices in the state's 58 counties provide services such as locating absent parents; establishing paternity; obtaining, enforcing, and modifying child support orders; and collecting and distributing payments. Federal law requires states to provide these services to all custodial parents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF, which is the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids [CalWORKs] program in California) and, on request, to non-TANF parents. Child support payments collected on behalf of TANF families have been used primarily to offset the federal, state, and county costs of TANF grants. Collections made on behalf of non-TANF parents are distributed directly to families.

Prior to recent legislative reforms in California, the program was administered at the local level by the county district attorneys (DAs), with state oversight by the Department of Social Services (DSS). The counties were authorized to refer certain delinquent cases to the (FTB) for collection.

## Transition Project Objectives

This project is to be performed in three stages:

- ❖ Stage 1: Assess counties' readiness to transition to separate child support agencies.
- ❖ Stage 2: Develop an integrated State and county transition detailing the steps pioneer counties will undertake to transition early.
- ❖ Stage 3: Implement the transition plans of the remaining counties.

### *Stage 1: Assessment Of Counties' Readiness To Transition*

In Stage 1, DCSS assessed the readiness of counties to transition from District Attorney offices. A survey tool, entitled the County Agency Transition Survey Tool, was developed and completed by each county. Counties are expected to transition during one of three phases: a) during year 2000, b) during year 2001, and c) during year 2002. Those counties transitioning during 2000 are referred to as "pioneer" counties. Per legislation, counties transitioning before December 31, 2001 must represent at least 50% of the statewide caseload. Remaining counties must transition before the end of 2002.

In addition to the assessment activities, an interaction model and communications plan were also developed in preparation for the transitioning of local administration.

### *Stage 2: Develop A Transition Plan For Early Transition*

In Stage II, a draft Transition Plan and County Work Plan will detail the steps "pioneer" counties will undertake to transition early will be prepared. As the "pioneer" counties transition, the transition plan will be validated against the actual progress of these counties and updated for counties transitioning in 2001 and 2002.

### *Stage 3: Implement The Transition Plans Of The Remaining Counties*

Based on the experience of the pioneer counties, DCSS will evaluate the effectiveness of the transition plan guideline and modify it accordingly. These transition plan guidelines will include county task templates, checklists, issue lists, and work plans.

## Description of the Plans

County Transition Plans highlight the activities counties must undertake to transition their local child support program from the DA office to a new separate county agency.

The County Work Plan, is a recommended timeline tracking mechanism. It lists the activities counties must undertake to transition their local child support program as well as the dates, resources and other timeline tracking tools supported by Microsoft Project.

This draft Transition Plan Guideline illustrates the steps necessary for counties to write their Transition Plan and perform other transition-related activities. Most of these activities are detailed in the County Work Plan.

## Objectives of the County Transition Plan

The county's Transition Plan should be used as follows:

- 1) Counties should use this to document their processes for transitioning their local child support program from the DA's office to a new separate county agency.
- 2) DCSS will use this document to verify county readiness and to approve transition.

## Objectives of the Transition Plan Guideline

The main objective of the transition plan guideline is to provide a list of required tasks the counties must address when preparing their transition plan. The guide also provides tasks counties should consider in transition planning.

## Chapter 2 - Transition Plan Guidelines

---

It is important to identify issues unique to the county in planning for the transition of assets, personnel and services from the Family Support Division of the District Attorney to the local child support agency. To ensure an orderly transition of Title IV-D services, the Department of Child Support Services recommends the county utilize the following transition tasks in preparation for the establishment of the local child support agency and transition from the Office of the District Attorney.

### Risk Mitigation

The county's transition plan should address any potential risk mitigation. Risks include circumstances, which may result in interruptions or disruption of services to clients resulting from the transition. Counties should identify both risks and risk mitigation tactics.

#### *Possible Risks*

Possible Risks include:

- Service Delivery Impacts
- Legislation/Ordinance Issues
- Personnel reclassifications
- Hiring capabilities
- Facility relocation delays
- Stakeholder management
- Department coordination
- Client/Customer issues
- Budgetary Risks
- Monetary Risks
- Automation and/or transfer to an interim system

#### *Risk Mitigation Tactics*

The county should identify risk mitigation tactics to address any identified risks. It is anticipated that preparation of the Transition Plan will assist

counties in mitigating the risks associated with the transition of services. However, each county must analyze and prepare strategies to meet their own unique situations.

## Key Transition Tasks

The county should document the key transition tasks as follows:

- New Agency Set Up
- Human Resource Activities
- Facility Activities
- Budget Issue Activities
- Child Support Legal Actions, Forms, and Public Notices
- Outreach Activities

### *New Agency Set-Up*

Chart the organizational structure of local child support agency. New Agency Set Up activities include:

- A. Establish Transition Committee
  - 1. Identify members of the County transition team.
- B. Draft ordinance creating new department
- C. Separate Cost Center for Child Support Program
  - 1. Each new agency must be its own separate cost center.

### *Human Resources*

Human resource activities include defining the roles and responsibilities of local child support agency personnel.

- A. Consider collective bargaining issues. Identify and review existing and anticipated contracts, negotiations, administration and management of contracts.
  - 1. Meet and confer with unions regarding creation of the new department and review all MOUs for any potential bargaining issues or staff representation issues.
  - 2. Meet and confer with internal employee groups regarding the creation of the new department.

- B. Update internal personnel policy and procedure manuals or inform staff that existing internal personnel policy and procedure manuals will continue to be in forced.
- C. Classification/Reclassification activities
  - 1. Transfer all new classifications to the new department.
    - a. County personnel services and County Council will draft any necessary ordinances to transfer positions to new department.
    - b. County personnel services will make necessary transfers of all existing code to new department.
    - c. Reassign all personnel to new agency.
    - d. Assign or continue safety committee coordinator and notify appropriate staff.
    - e. Update all job bulletins and position statements to reflect new department.
  - 2. Classify/Reclassify the following positions:
    - a. Director – Interim (if necessary)
    - b. Director – Permanent
    - c. Attorneys
      - i. Re-title District Attorneys as “Child Support Attorneys” and create their job description. Provide for limited empowerment by MOU with the DA to prosecute criminal child support enforcement actions.
      - ii. Re-title and rewrite the Family Support Assistant District Attorney position and job description as required by legislation.
      - iii. Review existing class specifications of family support officer/interviewer, family support manager/supervisor, and program specialist classification to modify any inappropriate references to the DA’s Office.
  - 3. Appointments or hiring of the following positions:
    - a. Director
    - b. Administrative Staff previously funded via the Indirect Cost Rate Proposal.
- D. Analyze short and long term strategies for attorney and law enforcement services.
  - 1. Investigators
    - a. Meet and confer with Investigator’s collective bargaining unit regarding new unit.



- b. Budget for investigators.
- 2. Contract for services with DA.
- 3. Access to DOJ information
- 4. Immunity Liability Coverage for Attorneys
  - a. Examine availability, coverage provisions and cost of attorney liability insurance policies and obtain bids for malpractice liability insurance coverage.

## *Facilities*

Facility activities include: determining facilities needs including office space, furniture, computer systems, telecommunications systems, consolidation or co-location of smaller county offices.

### A. Automation

- 1. Conduct an analysis of expanded computer system needs, data flow, and data processing training.
- 2. Review existing and anticipated infrastructure needs, including the demands for information technology.
- 3. Consider the impact of a new or pending transfer to an interim system, on the local agency transition.
- 4. Review the county and local child support agency information technology infrastructure needs, including hardware and software, and assess equipment and software transfer implications.
- 5. Assess the adequacy of WAN and router availability, e.g., whether there is a T-1 line to a central system, e-mail connectivity to the county system, access to legacy system historical data, if appropriate, and access to DMV data and CLETS.
- 6. Consider the effects of change on county automated systems and develop a plan for effecting required systems changes.
- 7. Develop a management plan for handling business tasks and staff needs in transitioning to the new department.

### B. Access

- 1. Notify property owners of the change to the new department.

### C. Acquire

- 1. Change any lease agreements.

- D. Move equipment and assets
  - 1. Identify all assets purchased with IV-D funding.
  - 2. Inventory furniture and items not on master index.
  - 3. Transfer computer equipment and items on the master property index.
  - 4. Transfer vehicles.
  - 5. Transfer pagers and cell phones for billing purposes.
  - 6. Transfer warranty registrations for all software.
  - 7. Transfer supplies, postage, televisions, TV cameras, video players and tape recorders.
  - 8. Transfer law library.
  - 9. Make changes to IVR's
  - 10. Inventory and itemize assets located in other facilities including Computers and Laptops at court facilities.
- E. Move staff
  - 1. Provide information on move to staff as soon as possible.
    - a. Order boxes.
    - b. Coordinate with labor organizations.
    - c. Schedule availability of telephone and data lines.
    - d. Schedule move.
    - e. Pack office and personal items.
  - 2. Provide for coverage of work during move.

### *Budget Issues*

- A. State review of budget
  - 1. The child support department budget will continue to be fully funded by the State but upon transition must be reviewed and approved by the CAO and Board of Supervisors.
  - 2. Transition Cost Allocation.
  - 3. Budget for various increased costs due to the transition such as forms, letterhead and computer coding changes.
- B. Prepare a transition specific budget addressing funding issues, start-up costs, and on-going funding needs.

- C. Existing contracts and plans of cooperation must be reviewed and renewed or amended to transfer the services and obligations they encompass to the new department.
- D. Assets transferred to new agency.
  - 1. Transfer checking accounts and change name.
  - 2. Transfer authorization cards allowing Child Support Program personnel to sign payment vouchers.
  - 3. Transfer credit cards.
  - 4. Transfer employee trust fund.
  - 5. Transfer authorization cards for purchasing through GSA.
  - 6. Transfer GSA cards for gas and maintenance for cars used by investigators and process servers.
  - 7. Change all account, support warrant, and fund designations.
  - 8. Transfer budget unit, system and budget reports.
  - 9. Transfer Bank financial reports.
- E. New Local administrator reviews budget with County executive to establish procedures and protocols if different from current.
  - 1. Assign analyst.
  - 2. Obtain necessary authorizations through county payroll services to allow designated person to pick up county warrants.
- F. Update County Fixed asset system to add new agency and transfer assets.
- G. Review existing contracts with vendors and identify which contracts will transfer to the new agency and what timelines will be required for state and federal approvals.

### *Child Support Legal Actions/Forms/Public Notices*

The following legal actions, forms and public notices should be updated to reflect the transfer of child support to the new agency:

- A. Examine IV-D documents utilized in the system to identify those produced solely for law enforcement aspects of child support.
  - 1. Division Letters
    - a. The new legislation moved all references to child support activities from the Welfare and Institutions code to the Family

Code. All division documents with these code section references must be amended.

- b. Prioritize articles that are mailed to the public first as well as judicial council documents.

2. Legal pleadings

- a. File and mail written notice of the change in department designation to parties of all pending court actions.

3. Notices (blanket or general)

- a. Provide all individuals in the Family Support Division caseload with a general notice of change in department designation.

B. Administrative documents

- 1. Letterhead
- 2. Business cards
- 3. Signs
- 4. Outreach materials booklets
- 5. Logos
- 6. Signing authorities
- 7. Website
- 8. Directory
- 9. County kiosks

## *Outreach*

New local agencies are required to undertake an outreach program to inform the public its services are available to all persons, regardless of whether they are receiving public assistance. At least one public meeting must be held with child support stakeholders, other than the forum of a local Board of Supervisors hearing. Notices should be prominently displayed in every area of the local child support agency in clear and simple language. The following outreach activities should also be undertaken:

- A. Analyze the level of community need for public outreach, customer service and communications.
- B. Consider conflict resolution methods and client complaint processing systems.
- C. Client (Custodial and Non-custodial Parents)

1. Identify client issues.
2. Provide written notification of changes to all IV-D clients.
3. Post client issues/resolutions.

D. Others

1. Notify employers.
2. Notify escrow and title companies.
3. Notify the general public.
4. Local and State Government entities.

## **Chapter 3 - Work Plan**

---

The County Work Plan provides recommended time frames to the tasks listed above. A sample Work Plan will be provided to the counties. It is also available electronically and via diskette upon request.

The counties should create a work plan outlining the timeframes of their transition plan. This document should be developed in Microsoft Project 98 and provided to DCSS on diskette.

## Chapter 4 - The DCSS Transition Plan

---

### Overview

Each county is required to submit a plan of transition for approval by the DCSS. (Family Code § 17305 (b)) Counties wishing to transition prior to January 1, 2001 must appoint a local child support agency Director and submit transition plan to the DCSS for approval (Family Code § 17305 (a)).

### County Requirements

The County Transition Plan must include the following elements:

- Name and telephone number of the person appointed by the county board of supervisors as the Local IV-D Director. Interim appointments are permissible pending recruitment/appointment of the permanent Director.
- Date on which the county wishes to initiate transition from the Office of the District Attorney to the new local child support agency.
- The proposed transition budget for the local child support agency, approved by the county board of supervisors.
- An organization chart illustrating the chain of command and the specific areas of responsibility within the local child support agency.
- The existing Plan of Cooperation with the DCSS and all county and state agencies.
- The existing Annual Automation Cooperation Agreement.
- Personnel service contracts (e.g., blood testing, service of process, data processing, office security, etc.).
- The proposed contract between the local child support agency and the District Attorney to continue existing services, with justifications.
- The levels of funding, staffing, and services existing within the District Attorney as of January 1, 1999, and good cause for any reductions in funding, staffing, or services, including staff attrition and caseload changes since January 1, 1999.
- Copies of all county forms, policies and regulations unique to the Office of the District Attorney used in child support enforcement under the Title IV-D state plan exclusive of Judicial Council Forms

and Department of Social Services, Office of Child Support forms, policies and regulations.

- Signature of both the DA and the Board of Supervisors.

## **County Transition Plan Worksheet**

The counties should include the following worksheet in their Transition Plan.



## COUNTY TRANSITION PLAN WORKSHEET

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Local IV-D Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Transition Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Transition Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

DOES THE COUNTY ANTICIPATE REQUESTING APPROVAL TO REMAIN UNDER CONTRACT  
FOR SERVICES WITH THE DA FOR A PERIOD OF TIME FOLLOWING TRANSITION TO THE  
LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY?

Yes \_\_ No \_\_

***Attach appropriate documentation relating to each topic below***

Name of the Local IV-D Director (or interim Director)	4
Proposed Transition Budget for Local Child Support Agency	4
Local Child Support Agency Organization Chart	4
Existing Plan of Cooperation	4
Existing Annual Automation Cooperation Agreement	4
Personnel Services Contracts	4
Proposed Contract for Services with the District Attorney (if appropriate)	4
Proposed Staffing Levels (Additional/Reductions)	4
Local Child Support Enforcement Forms Unique to the County	4
Certification that all equipment and/or fixed assets purchased with IV-D monies have been transferred to the new department	4
Certification that a public meeting was held notifying IV-D stakeholders of transition	4
County Work Plan	4
Co-signed by both the District Attorney and the Board of Supervisors	4